

The cover letter tells the employer why you are the best candidate for the position. The cover letter may be used as a screening tool, especially with finalists; so it should be tailored to a specific opening to show the employer that you are serious about your job search. Infuse your personality and passion for that position.

Do your research, personalize, be succinct, sell yourself and use keywords.

✓ **RESEARCH**

Before you start writing your letter, **research the website of the potential employer** – it will be worth your effort to learn about recent news, events and business information.

✓ **PERSONALIZE**

If possible, **address your cover letter to a specific person** by finding out who will be reviewing your submission. Make sure you spell names and businesses correctly. If the referral instructions state not to call the employer, address the letter to “Human Resources,” “Hiring Executive” or “Selection Committee Members.” Use Mr., Ms. or Dr. in your salutation - **never use** “To Whom,” “Dear Sir” or “Madam.”

✓ **INTRODUCE YOURSELF**

A cover letter is a handshake, an introduction – the first impression the employer will have about you. If you are responding to an ad for an open position, mention the ad and the position in the first line or two.

✓ **SELL YOURSELF and USE KEYWORDS.**

Articulate your value. Don’t just repeat what you stated on your resume. The cover letter and resume should work together to tell your story. The cover letter is the chance to match your soft skills to the exact specifications in the employer’s job description. In other words, **use keywords from the job description in your cover letter.** This demonstrates to the employer how your experience and accomplishments directly relates to the position you are applying.

✓ **THANK THE READER and REVIEW, REVIEW AND HAVE SOMEONE ELSE REVIEW.**

Thank the reader and invite them to contact you anytime with questions or to set up an interview time. Always **proof read your letter** for typos before submitting it!

****Remember, your cover letter tells an employer why you are the most qualified candidate. A cover letter and resume package shows dedication and demonstrates you took the time to write a letter, research the company and think about your fit. YOU ARE UNIQUE – EXPRESS YOUR PERSONAL BRAND!**

